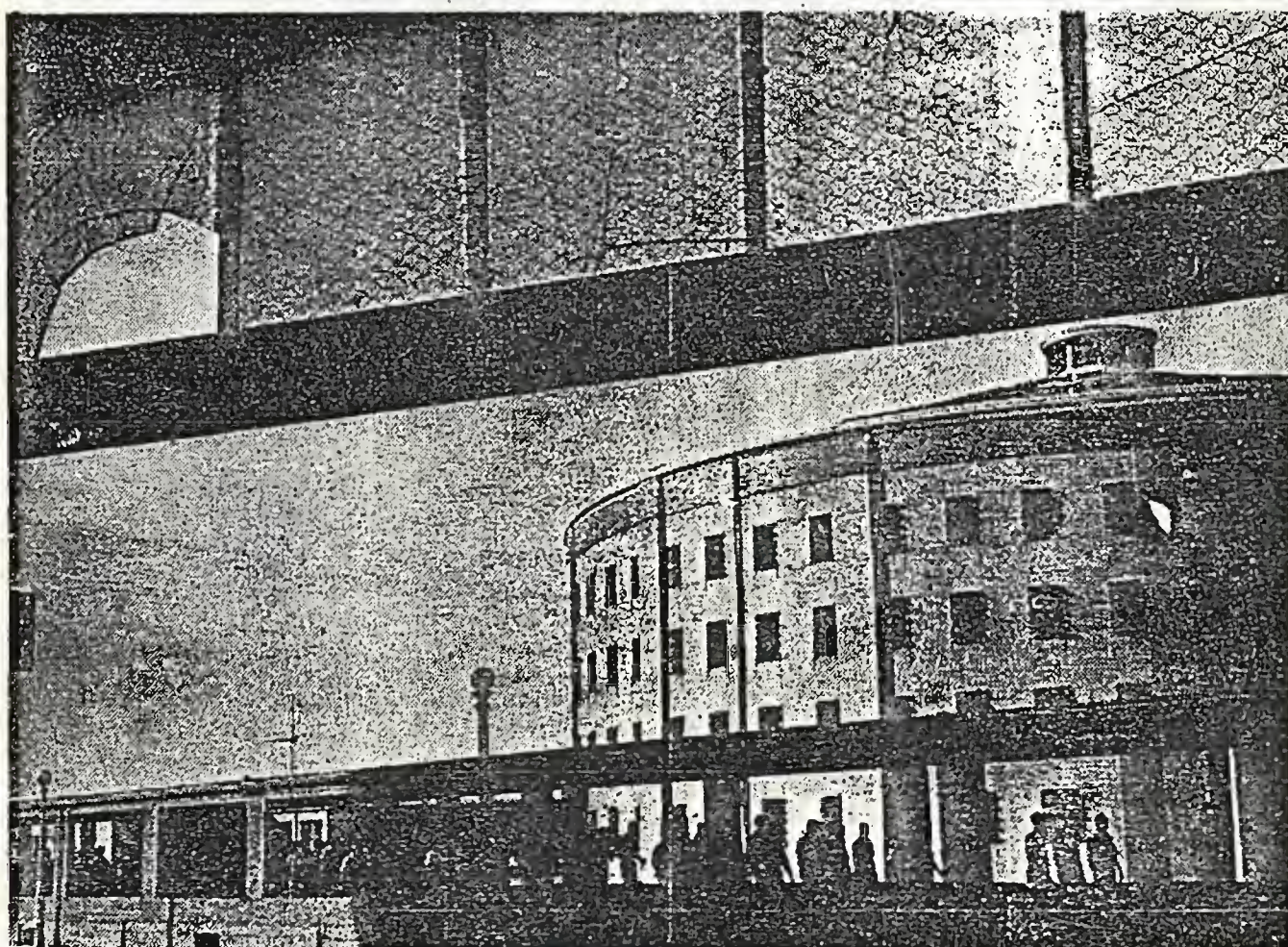


Notes from an Afrikan P.O.W. Journal book two



N O T I C E

NOTES FROM AN AFRIKAN P.O.W. JOURNAL accepts contributions. The JOURNAL is produced by Afrikan prisoners as a vehicle for debate, comment and analysis on the theoretical, practical and organizational issues/aspects of the struggle of Afrikan people in amerikkka for independence and socialist development.

Contributions should, if possible, be limited to within ten (10) type-written pages, single spaced. Because of present limitations, we won't be able to accept and publish all contributions -- but we'll make every effort to publish as many as possible. Neither can we be responsible for the safe receipt and return of contributions.

The JOURNAL will, whenever possible, publish four (4) times a year, in March, June, September, and December. Contributions should be in our hands at least sixty (60) days prior to the next publication date. They should be mailed to:

P.O.W. JOURNAL
c/o N.A.P.O.
P. O. Box 6020
Chicago, Illinois 60680

NOTES FROM AN AFRIKAN

P.O.W. JOURNAL

BOOK TWO:

WE STILL CHARGE GENOCIDE

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2. We Still Charge Genocide
3. Toward Clarity on CC's, PP's, and POW's
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6. Message to Afrikan American Women for Positive and Productive Change

"I, for one, believe that if you give people a thorough understanding of what it is that confronts them, and the basic causes that produce it, they'll create their own program; and when the people create a program, you get action."

El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X) December 20, 1964

* * * *

"To overthrow a political power, it is always necessary, first of all, to create public opinion, to do work in the ideological sphere."

Mao Tse-Tung, Tenth Plenary Session of Eight Central
Committee of the Chinese Communist Party

* * * *

"Among the factors that determine the direction to be taken, the proletariat's correct understanding of its own historical position is of the very first importance ..."

Georg Lukacs, HISTORY AND CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS



**We
Still Charge
GENOCIDE**

**NEW
AFRIKAN
PRISONERS
ORGANIZATION**



I

The Thirteenth Amendment: Instrument of Legalized Slavery and the Re-Subjugation of New Afrika

BACKGROUND

While these words are being written, a U.S. Prisoners' Petition To The United Nations is being circulated throughout amerikkka, both inside and outside prison walls. The petition, which is to be presented to the U.N. Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities between August 22nd and September 9, 1977, in Geneva, Switzerland, states in part:

AS PRISONERS WE PROTEST: The subjugation of all prisoners to involuntary servitude and slavery. The 13th amendment of the u.s. constitution states, "Neither slavery, nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crimes where the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the united states, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." We protest the 13th amendment which legalizes slavery in the u.s. Our protest and condemnation of the practice of slavery is upheld by international United Nations law, which states, "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery or the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."

The NEW AFRIKAN PRISONERS ORGANIZATION/Stateville, helped to circulate this petition, and we also began to research the 13th amendment and the circumstances surrounding its formulation, ratification, and resulting consequences.

We began this research for several reasons, one being that in the course of acquiring signatures and discussing (the entire petition and) the particular issue of the 13th amendment, we became aware of a general absence of an understanding of the amendment and its relation to u.s. prisons.

We were also inspired because of our belief that -- especially as regards prisoners of oppressed nations inside the u.s. -- the 13th amendment is related to an issue much broader than the subjugation of prisoners alone. Our study demonstrated to us that a better understanding of the 13th amendment -- as well as the 14th and 15th amendments -- can play a vital role in raising the level of the struggle of Afrikan people in amerikkka and, consequently, contribute to the struggles of all peoples against the u.s. imperialist state. The reason for this is that, as our research revealed, the 13th (as well as the 14th and 15th) amendment to the u.s. constitution ORIGINATED -- and continues to serve as -- an instrument in the maintenance of the national oppression of New Afrikan people. Therefore, a challenge to it is directly related to the struggle of all Afrikan people inside the u.s. for self-determination, independence, and land.

I
The Thirteenth Amendment

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

It was never the intention of the rulers of the u.s. to "abolish" slavery. That is, it was never their intention to discontinue the domination and exploitation of Afrikan people in the u.s.

This fact became clearer to us as we read BLACK RECONSTRUCTION IN AMERICA, by W.E.B. DuBois: "... A war, which to the intense dissatisfaction of the Abolitionists had begun with the distinct object, even on the part of the great Emancipator, to save and protect slavery, and in no way to disturb it, except to keep it out of competition with the free peasant of the West, had resulted in Emancipation ... Thus, a legal-metaphysical dispute, involving the right of slave states to expand into the territories, was rapidly changed, first to a question of freedom for slaves, and then to a struggle for inaugurating a new form of national government in the United States.

"When the physical war ended, then the real practical problems presented themselves. How was slavery to be effectively abolished? And what was to be the status of the (Afrikans)? ... Slavery had been abolished as a war measure. This should be confirmed and extended by a constitutional amendment. Some control of the (Afrikan) population must be devised in the place of slavery, so as to introduce the (Afrikan) into his new freedom. The power of the national government had been greatly expanded by war. This expansion must be consolidated so that in the future secession would be impossible and slavery never re-established.

"The difficulty with this legalistic formula was that it did not cling to facts. Slavery was not abolished even after the Thirteenth Amendment. There were four million freedmen and most of them on the same plantation, doing the same work that they did before emancipation, except as their work had been interrupted and changed by the upheaval of war. Moreover, they were getting about the same wages and apparently were going to be subject to slave codes modified only in name ..." (BR, pps. 187-188)

The freedom allegedly given to all Afrikans in the u.s. by the 13th amendment merely meant "a legal doing away with individual physical control." The individual physical control of Afrikans by amerikkkan slave-owners was replaced by a collective physical control — control by the u.s. government, by the u.s. imperialist state.

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After we were "emancipated" from the control of individual slave-owners and placed under the collective control of the u.s. government; after this was confirmed and extended by a u.s. constitutional amendment, "Some control of the (Afrikan) population" was devised so as to introduce us into our new so-called freedom. The rulers of the u.s. still aimed at controlling the Afrikan population within its borders. Our "new freedom" was simply a new form of slavery.

"The power of the national (imperialist) government had been greatly expanded by war. This expansion must be consolidated so that in the future secession (a break-up of the empire) would be impossible and slavery (the mere individual physical control of Afrikans by individual white slave-owner/settlers), never re-established.

Thus, the provision in the 13th amendment which states that "slavery" can only exist in prisons, which means that individual physical control of Afrikans could only "legally" exist in prisons after "due convictions" by the federal and state courts of the u.s. empire.

Even though most of us remained on the same plantation after passage of the 13th amendment, it was not the same "slavery" that we were subject to as had existed prior to "emancipation." Because, just as the slave codes were modified in name only, so was our national oppression.

II

It has been necessary to emphasize the above facts, so that we can be clear on their interpretation, be able to trace other connections, and to interpret these as well. Among these connections we'll find the 14th and 15th amendments. To arrive at an understanding, to begin the approach to a consciousness that will feed revolutionary struggle, we should begin with the slavery of Afrikan people in the u.s.

Afrikans were kidnapped from our home and brought to the u.s. in chains to satisfy its demand for a large source of cheap and exploitable labor. We were brought here to work -- not for ourselves -- but for the plantation owner, the slave master, the white amerikkan settler. We were brought here to work, but not to work "freely;" our labor was forced, controlled and specifically directed and planned, so as to most fully benefit the needs of our oppressors: to guarantee the most profit, to provide the most capital for amerikka's economic growth and development.

This was clear to the settlers themselves in the latter half of the 1600's, since it was during this period that they began to "legally" exclude Afrikans from the nation that they were using us to build.

"Afrikans began arriving (in large numbers and as a result of kidnapping), in what was to become the United States sometime around 1619. Within 40 years the social practice and the laws of the emerging new European nation here had made it clear that Afrikans, free and slave, were not to be permitted

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to join this new white nation, nor were the Afrikans — the majority of whom were slaves — to be allowed in peace and in numbers to join the Indian nations here, largely because of the European policy of hunting down 'fugitive' slaves.

"Thus, law and custom in North Amerikkka by 1660 had forced the creation of a new Afrikan nation here. That nation was composed of Afrikans from many different nations and tribes in Afrika, with white genes injected by the slavemasters, who almost universally left their children with their Afrikan mothers and the Afrikan group, and with Indian genes. Colonial laws and the practice of oppression by whites created a New Afrikan Nation in the English colonies one hundred years before the U.S. Declaration of Independence. It was a nation founded upon and cemented by the essentially homogeneous Afrikan cultural background and an essentially similar interaction of all the Afrikan peoples here with an essentially homogeneous oppression." (Imari Obadele I, President, Provisional Government of the Republic of New Africa)

It's clear that amerikkka had its birth as an imperialist state in the 1660's, with its enslavement, and subjugation, of a new ... nation ... of Afrikan people.

Afrikan enslavement served the interests of the entire imperialist state — and the world imperialist system. Cotton production alone in the u.s. rose from 9,000 bales in 1791 to over five million in 1852. "Such facts and others, coupled with the increase of the slaves to which they were related as both cause and effect, meant a new world; and all the more so because with increase in Amerikkkan cotton and Afrikan slaves, came both by chance and ingenuity new miracles for manufacturing, and particularly for the spinning and weaving of cloth.

"The giant forces of water and of steam were harnessed to do the world's work, and the black workers of amerikkka (were) bent at the bottom of a growing pyramid of commerce and industry; and they not only could not be spared, if this new economic organization was to expand, but rather they became the cause of new political demands and alignments, of new dreams of power and visions of empire.

"First of all, their work called for widening stretches of new, rich, black soil -- in Florida, in Louisiana, in Mexico; even in Kansas. This land, added to cheap labor and easily regulated and distributed, made profits so high that a whole system of culture arose in the South, with a new leisure and social philosophy. Black labor became the foundation stone not only of the Southern social structure, but of northern manufacture and commerce, of the English factory system, of European commerce, of buying and selling on a world-wide scale; new cities were built on the results of black labor, and a new labor problem, involving all white labor, arose both in Europe and Amerikkka." (BR, pps. 4-5)

(The "new labor problem" involving all white labor, both in amerikkka and in europe, was the problem of their bribery, their sharing in the fruits of imperialist plunder, their tendency to co-operate in the oppression and exploitation of the nations subjugated by the rulers of the imperialist state(s). It was the creation of this "new labor problem" which allowed DuBois to add that Afrikan slavery "was a matter of both race and social condition, but the condition was limited and determined by race." In place of the word "race" we should read NATIONAL, as in "national oppression." It's our reality as a nation which limits and determines our condition; in turn, it's our continued national oppression which limits and determines the labor problem among all white (oppressor nation) labor. That problem, like our condition, can only be resolved through our national liberation.)

We were the foundation stone, the cause, for the development of amerikkkan and world capitalism and emerging imperialism; our condition was defined as "slavery" and it was this particular form of our national domination and exploitation which led to the amerikkkan civil war, because it represented a fundamental contradiction within the u.s. imperialist system. In the South "slavery" was characteristic. That is, the individual control of Afrikans aimed at extracting profits, accumulating surplus value, was characteristic of the national oppression of Afrikans in that region of the u.s. empire. In the north, the dominant illusion was that Afrikans could "escape slavery," work for wages, and "find freedom." In the northern region of the u.s. empire, state control of the Afrikan was characteristic.

It's generally understood that "free" Afrikans in amerikkka were not "free" in the same sense that whites in amerikkka were "free." No matter the "legal" status of Afrikans inside the u.s., they remained members of a nation oppressed. And this national oppression was "legalized" and given a new form through the 13th amendment to the u.s. constitution -- along with the 14th and 15th amendments to that same document.

III

While Afrikan national oppression and exploitation was the foundation for the total imperialist system, for the entire capitalist development of the u.s., we've seen that our national oppression had two more or less distinct characteristic forms, one in the north and the other in the south. In this sense, there were two more or less distinct forms of u.s. imperialist exploitation and domination of the New Afrikan Nation.

The contradiction that these two forms of u.s. imperialist exploitation took was sharpened as both the north and south sought to expand their imperialism. Both the northern form and the southern form sought to extend themselves, to intensify the exploitation of natural resources through greater, more extensive exploitation of the human resources represented by New African people.

This is the meaning of the "irrepressible conflict:" whether the southern form of Afrikan exploitation and national domination would be carried into the territories and tend to become the dominant form/tendency of u.s. imperialism; or, whether the northern form of Afrikan national oppression and exploitation — state control rather than individual control of Afrikans — would extend itself into the territories and thus become the dominant tendency, the characteristic form of imperialism within u.s. borders.

A war was begun, and the north won it. With the north's victory over the south, there began "a struggle for inaugurating a new form of national government in the united states. ... The power of the national government had been greatly expanded by war. This expansion must be consolidated so that in the future secession would be impossible and slavery never reestablished."

The problem was the south. The problem was how to hold the empire together under the domination of the northern form of oppression and exploitation. The problem was, really, the presence of the Afrikan nation within the u.s. borders. Our presence was (is) key in deciding the fate of the u.s. imperialistic state.

"...(I)ndustrialists after the war expected the South to seize upon the opportunity to make increased profit by a more intelligent exploitation of labor than was possible under the slave system. They looked upon free Afrikan labor as a source of profit, and considered freedom, that is, a legal doing away with individual physical control, all that the Afrikans or their friends could ask. They did not want for Afrikan labor any special protection or political power or capital ... They expected some popular education and a gradual granting of the right to vote, which would be straitly curtailed in its power for mischief by the far larger power of capital.

"The South, however, persisted in its pre-war conception of these two tendencies in the North ('free' Afrikan labor as a source of profit, and the legal doing away of individual physical control — the beginning of the end of 'free competition' and of 'private profit' and the seeds of monopoly capital). It sought to reestablish slavery by force, because it had no comprehension of the means by which modern industry could secure the advantages of slave labor without its responsibilities. The South, therefore, opposed Afrikan education, opposed land and capital for Afrikans, and violently and bitterly opposed any political power. It fought every conception inch by inch; no real emancipation, limited civil rights, no Afrikan schools, no votes for Afrikans.

"In the face of such intransigence, Northern industry was, on the whole, willing to yield, since none of these concessions really obstructed the expansion of industry and capital in the nation. When, however, the South went beyond reason and truculently demanded not simply its old political

power but increased political power based on disfranchised Afrikans, which it openly threatened to use for the revision of the tariff, for the repudiation of the national debt, for disestablishing the national banks, and for putting the new corporate form of industry under strict state regulation and rule, Northern industry was frightened and began to move towards the stand (of) ... temporary dictatorship, endowed Afrikan education, legal civil rights, and eventually even votes for Afrikans to offset the Southern threat of economic attack." (BR, p. 185)

But not "eventually" votes for Afrikans. Immediate! To offset the southern threat of economic and political attack upon the northern ruling class.

It's evident that in the minds of both southern and northern imperialists, Afrikan people were not "free" even after the 13th amendment. Afrikans did not cease to be the foundation stone of the amerikkkan system with the end of the civil war. But the war made it necessary to alter the "oppressive contract."

By u.s. and international law, we were free after the 13th amendment. But we were not free in the minds and plans of the imperialists. We get an indication of this from the just quoted section, where, although we were "legally" a free people, independent of the u.s., they continued to consider us a factor in their political and economic struggles, continued to consider us a form of property, to see our nation as a source to be manipulated and exploited so as to continue to pump life into the empire.

Because, if we were truly free, in our relations with the u.s. imperialist state, then there would have been no question of the south seeking "increased political power based on disfranchised Afrikans." A FREE people cannot be "disfranchised."

We had the "franchise" at home. We were born with the franchise; our fore-parents exercised this natural franchise on the shores of our Afrikan homeland. But, the ability to exercise it was denied us by our kidnappers. After their civil war it had simply become necessary for the slavemaster to recognize -- on paper -- our inherent right to independence and self-determination.

We already know that the New Afrikan Nation was born in/during the period of slavery; New Afrika arose on the north amerikkkan continent before 1660. It was a birth facilitated by our kidnapping and enslavement, and the ensuing law and custom of the slavemaster.

While there had been "manumission" of Afrikans individually or in small numbers by individual slavemasters, the first mass "manumission" of Afrikans in the u.s. occurred on August 6, 1861, with the enactment of the Confiscation Act. This mass recognition of the Afrikan's inherent freedom was followed by another Confiscation Act on July 17, 1862.

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The "emancipation proclamation" of January, 1863, freed all Afrikans who were still held as slaves in those areas of the imperialist state which sought to establish their independence from the u.s. empire. The emancipation proclamation even said it: "... that the executive government of the united states, including the military and naval authorities thereof, WILL RECOGNIZE and maintain (this recognition of) the freedom of said persons." The "said persons" being members of the New Afrikan Nation.

When the 13th amendment was passed by the imperialists in December, 1865, they recognized -- on paper -- the freedom of all Afrikans inside u.s. borders -- they recognized the freedom of the entire Nation!

But it's important to point out here: with the passage of all these acts by the imperialists, they simply acknowledged our existence as a sovereign nation. None of these acts offered any social, political or economic "rights" or privileges within the imperialist state. The 13th amendment removed the municipal law of the u.s. which effected the enslavement of New Afrikans, "thus leaving the New Afrikan nation as a free political entity, legally on territory claimed by the United States." (Imari Obadele)

Once the freedom of New Afrikans was "legally" recognized by the imperialist state, we could not again be "legally" incorporated into the u.s. without our informed, freely expressed, consent.

When the south presented its threat to the empire during and after the war, "... There was only one defense against the power of the South and while that was revolutionary and hitherto unheard of, it was the only way ... That was Afrikan suffrage." (BR, p. 330)

The "legal" re-subjugation of the New Afrikan Nation through amendments to the u.s. constitution was being contemplated and planned before the passage of the 13th amendment. But, of course, the 13th amendment was in reality only the first step in the process.

In Black Reconstruction, DuBois quotes a letter written by Charles Sumner: "... but the question (of giving votes to Afrikans) has become immensely practical in this respect: Without their votes we cannot establish stable governments in the Rebel States. Their votes are as necessary as their muskets." (BR, p. 199)

DuBois also quotes Wendell Phillips on the subject: "The Afrikan must be given the franchise because we have no other timber to build states with, and unless we build with him, we must postpone reconstruction for so many years ..." (BR, p. 200)

But we couldn't be given the amerikkkan vote unless we were u.s. citizens; and we couldn't be considered u.s. citizens unless we were recognized as being free. Therefore, the u.s. imperialist state legally recognized our freedom with the 13th amendment, so that they could "make" us u.s. citizens with the

13th Amendment

14th amendment, and thereby "grant" us the u.s. privilege of voting with the 15th amendment. Neither of these amendments had the object of truly maintaining the recognition of the freedom of Afrikan people, as an independent nation within u.s. borders, or as so-called citizens of the imperialist state.

"... After the Thirteenth Amendment, a great body of people now stood as free, facing their former slave masters. If the Afrikans were free (and they were), neither the former slave master nor any other group or person could tell the (former) slave what to do. One of the rights the Afrikan should have had was the right to determine his future state relationships. His choices should have included:

- 1) Would he like to become a citizen of the U.S."
- 2) Would he like to go back to Afrika?
- 3) Would he like to go to another country?
- 4) Would he like (the u.s. to forfeit its claim to some land) to set up a nation of his own?

But the Fourteenth Amendment wrongfully excluded all these choices except one and imposed upon the Afrikan a condition of special citizenship. The insistence of the white man upon the validity of the Fourteenth Amendment, which denied to the freed Afrikan his rightful choices -- mean only that the white man was insisting on a continuation of white control over fundamental Black decision-making. It meant, in other words, a continuation of slave status, though in a somewhat less odious form. There has still been no settlement of the question of state-status for the Afrikan. For, such a settlement could only evolve on the basis of bilateral agreements between the Afrikan and Euro-Amerikkkan peoples, each of them free, and with the Afrikan enjoying his right -- as a free man wrongfully transported and enslaved -- to make a choice among the four options for his future that we have outlined above.

"Afrikans could not have been rightfully enslaved. As free people wrongfully enslaved, with the wrong now admitted by the white enslaver, no law could shut out other options and impose upon free Afrikans citizenship in the United States. And our status with respect to state affiliation and our future relations with the heirs of our fathers' white slave masters still remains to be settled." ("The Republic of New Afrika: An Independent Black Nation", Imari Obadele, I, BLACK WORLD, May, 1971, pp. 86-87).

IV

The challenge to the 13th Amendment now being made is not ONLY a challenge to legalized slavery in amerikkkan prisons. We can't successfully challenge the 13th amendment without challenging its historical basis for existence. That historical basis was the re-subjugation of the New Afrikan Nation.

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The New Afrikan Nation is struggling to liberate itself. A part of that struggle involves a challenge to the "legal" basis which far too many Afrikans still believe gives the u.s. the right to exercise authority over us. The struggle being waged by Afrikans in the u.s. involves challenging and destroying the sense of legitimacy which we hold toward the u.s. imperialist state.

The 13th amendment remains one of the instruments used by the amerikkkan government to deceive us, to make us think we are a part of it. The amendment remains an instrument used to maintain the domination of New Afrika. Therefore, the challenge to the 13th amendment can in no way be separated from the struggle to liberate the entire nation of New Afrikan people.

It would be incorrect to see this amendment as nothing more than something used to subjugate all prisoners. Because prisoners are able to make this challenge not because the amendment allowed the "legalization of slavery" in prisons, as such; but because IT ALLOWED AFRIKANS TO BE MADE PRISONERS, AND THEREBY "LEGALLY" RE-ENSLAVED — initially in the southern section of the u.s., and later from u.s. border to border.

It took some time for the south to begin to share some of the north's vision as to how to "make increased profit by a more intelligent exploitation of labor." For instance, Dan Lacy, in his THE WHITE USE OF BLACKS IN AMERICA, writes: "On the eve of World War I, the new system of white control (share-cropping) had reached its peak of effectiveness, and it provided a much more efficient and profitable method of exploiting black labor in commercial agriculture than had slavery. Output per man-hour of black labor in cotton production was substantially higher than before emancipation. Sharecropping made the (Afrikan's) own meager income dependent on his productivity and got more work out of him than could any form of discipline under slavery ... At the same time the cost of black labor was probably less. Only an unusual worker in an unusual year could hope to gain more than the subsistence that had formerly been given all slaves. And the freedom of the planter from the burden of support of the elderly and invalid and from the necessity of tying up capital in the purchase of slaves probably actually significantly lowered his man-hour labor cost in constant dollars."

And, Lerone Bennett, Jr., has pointed out that, "Between 1870 and 1910, cotton production tripled, and the appropriated black surplus helped pay for the reconstruction of the South, the industrialization of the North, and the western settlement." (THE MAKING OF BLACK AMERICA)

Southern thinking was, in the months and years immediately following the amerikkkan civil war, still dominated by remembrance of the old form, the old slave system.

"From the beginning of the reconstruction period, white southern leaders had manifested extreme anxiety over the stability of their labor supply. As Carl Schurz noted in a postwar tour of the South, white people still believed

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that the black worker existed 'for the special object of raising cotton, rice, and sugar for the whites and that it (was) illegitimate for him to indulge, like other people, in the pursuit of his own happiness in his own way.' Schurz added: "But although the freedman is no longer considered the property of the individual master, he is considered the slave of society." (Bennett)

The Afrikan who was now considered the slave of the total amerikkan society was now a colonial subject. The new system which was to replace "slavery" was colonialism.

Lerone Bennett again: "Three major sub-systems -- peonage, disfranchisement, and segregation -- constituted the cutting edge of the new system, and these sub-systems meshed in an overarching framework which relegated most (Afrikans) to a state which was not markedly different from slavery. In the generation after Reconstruction, tenancy and peonage laws, supplemented by official and unofficial violence, confined most black workers to Black Belt plantations, where they continued to harvest the crops of slavery. In 1890, a generation after slavery, seven out of every eight black workers were still harvesting cotton and sugar crops in the old plantation settings or performing domestic work in demeaning urban contexts. Under the provisions of tenancy and peonage laws, which the U. S. Supreme Court sanctioned until 1910, it was difficult and in some cases illegal for these workers to change jobs without the consent of their employers. In 1912, W.E.B. DuBois estimated that at least 250,000 black laborers were being held to service on Southern plantations by force." (Bennett)

Since Afrikans were now legally "free" under u.s. law, they were forced into "contracts" to secure their labor. In South Carolina, for instance, that state's Black Codes made unemployment for Afrikans a "crime," and for this "crime" they were "duly convicted" and sentenced to work on white-owned farms and plantations -- without pay. Because they were than "prisoners," -- right?

"When, towards the end of Reconstruction, white leaders unleashed the Klan and other terrorist organizations, they said frankly that their central concern was not race but property and labor ... Lewis E. Parsons, a former governor of Alabama, told a Congressional investigating committee that the fundamental purpose of the terrorist campaign was to control the black man and his labor. It came to be understood, he said, 'that in this way negroes might be made to toe the mark again, to do the bidding of the employer, to come up to time a little more promptly, and do more work than they would otherwise do.'" (Bennett)

When the contract labor system failed, and when the terror also failed, "... black criminals were deliberately manufactured by the legal system which was an adjunct to the notorious prison convict system. On the slightest pretext, and oftentimes with no pretext at all, young black men were sentenced to long prison terms and leased out to plantation owners, railroad builders, and other businessmen.

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"This system was no accident; it was a result of will, cunning, and design. And what was the purpose? The purpose was the continuation of slavery ... More concretely, the purpose was to force a whole race (nation) of people to live at a subsistence level while the fruits of their labor were appropriated by others." (Bennett)

On the same subject, DuBois says, "... In Georgia, at the outbreak of the Civil War, there were about 200 white felons confined at Milledgeville. There were no Afrikan convicts, since under the discipline of slavery Afrikans were punished on the plantation. The white convicts were released to fight in the Confederate armies. The whole criminal system came to be used as a method of keeping Afrikans at work and intimidating them. Consequently there began to be a demand for jails and penitentiaries beyond the natural demand due to the rise of (so-called) crime " (BR, p. 506) And: "Above all, crime was used in the South as a source of income for the state ... In no part of the modern world has there been so open and conscious a traffic in crime for deliberate social degradation and private profit as in the South since slavery ... Since 1876 Afrikans have been arrested on the slightest provocation and given long sentences or fines which they were compelled to work out ..." (BR, p. 698)

It was the 13th amendment which allowed this legalized re-enslavement of Afrikans. The 13th amendment was specifically directed toward this objective.

We recognize that prisons still perform an economic function and that the labor of prisoners is still exploited. But we don't believe that this is what characterizes prisons in 1977 amerikkka.

It's our belief that the present and future thought and actions of prisoners -- especially prisoners of oppressed nations -- must begin to emphasize and become active around the use of u.s. prisons as "detention centers," and "konzentration kamps," -- as instruments in national oppression and genocide.

This piece has purposely concentrated on defining the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments as instruments of national oppression because we believe that this is not only the most correct conception; but also because we believe this will contribute to raising the level of national consciousness among Afrikan people, and consequently to successful revolutionary nationalist war -- a war for the independence of Afrikan people, a war to regain the National Territory; a war which will lead to the establishment of sovereignty for New Afrika and its socialist development.

Build To Win!

Stateville
Konzentration
Kamp
8/31/77



II

We STILL Charge Genocide

IF SOUTH AFRICA IS GUILTY OF VIOLATING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF AFRIKANS HERE ON THE MOTHER CONTINENT, THEN AMERIKKKA IS GUILTY OF WORSE VIOLATIONS OF THE 22 MILLION AFRIKANS ON THE AMERIKKKAN CONTINENT. AND IF SOUTH AFRICAN RACISM IS NOT A DOMESTIC ISSUE, THEN AMERIKKKAN RACISM ALSO IS NOT A DOMESTIC ISSUE.

El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X), addressing the Organization of Afrikan Unity, July 17, 1964

During and after Watts, Detroit, and many other black rebellions of the 1960's, those who rule amerikkka saw the need to keep pictures of burning buildings, angry blacks, armed police and soldiers off the t.v. screens and the front pages of newspapers. They said to themselves: "The more burning that blacks see, the more they'll do. The more aggressively active blacks that are seen on the screen, the more we'll have to contend with on the streets."

Our enemy used censorship to isolate us from each other, and to prevent the further development of a truly revolutionary mass consciousness. He suppressed news coverage of our worsening condition and the means we were employing to change it, as part of his program to destroy our movement towards national liberation.

In moving to destroy our movement, he had to keep us ignorant, and he also had to distort the few facts that he did let us know about. In 1977 amerikkka, hundreds of our people have been killed by police and other white supremacists in major cities and backwoods towns. But we don't -- and won't -- hear about these murders from Barbara Walters or Walter Kronkite.

A very deliberate policy is in force in the u.s. to distort and misdefine the condition we experience as a people. Those who rule this kountry seek to prevent us from becoming aware of our situation, because they want to keep us from acting -- aggressively -- in our own interests.

"... Awareness is essential because it determines your actions. And once you become aware you WILL act. Aware, you could no more refuse to act than to stand in the middle of a railroad track and watch a runaway locomotive bear down on you. You will act and act in the correct manner, because it is a matter of life and death that you do so ..." (Sundiata Acoli, BREAK DE CHAINS)

And ours IS a matter of life or death. Because when we become aware of our situation, we become aware of ourselves as victims of GENOCIDE.

"The genocide of which we complain is as much a fact as gravity. The whole world knows of it. The proof is in every day's newspapers, in every one's sight and hearing in these United States. In one form or another it has been practiced for more than three hundred years although never with such sinister implications for the welfare and peace of the world as at present. Its very familiarity disguises its horror. It is a crime so embedded in law, so explained away by specious rationale, so hidden by talk of liberty, that even the conscience of the tender minded is sometimes dulled. Yet the conscience of mankind cannot be beguiled from its duty by the pious phrases and the deadly legal euphemisms with which its perpetrators seek to transform their guilt into high moral purpose." (WCG, p. 4)

Many of us only associate the word "genocide" with Hitler, Jews, and gas ovens. When black folks in amerikkka think of the crime of genocide, we tend to think of millions of some other people being killed "all at once," in some far away place, in the past. We tend to associate the victims of genocide with someone other than ourselves. We tend to regard as criminals who practice genocide someone other than those who rule amerikkka, and those who serve and protect its interests.

But the word "genocide" was first used by Rafael Lemkin, who defined it as being effected through "physical, political, social, cultural, biological, economic and religious and moral oppression." (WCG, p. 46)

Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948, states in part that genocide means ANY of the following acts committed with INTENT to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- a. Killing members of the group;
- b. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d. Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.

These two definitions of genocide should begin to make us aware that our conditions of life are not simply the consequences of having a "few bad men in office," or the results of "inequality" or of the "culture of poverty." Genocide is a conscious, systematic policy practiced upon blacks by those who rule amerikkka, and it is carried out on all levels by both public and private political, economic, and socio-cultural institutions.

The above definitions also point out that genocide: 1) can be committed with the mere intent to destroy a group -- the intent need not be fully realized before the group can be legitimately recognized as being victim to genocide;

2) genocide can be demonstrated against a group if the intent is to destroy that group "in whole or in part." In other words, genocide can be committed against a group if it is committed against a single individual belonging to the group; 3) genocide can occur without the actual killing of members of the group. Genocide can exist where "serious bodily or mental harm" is inflicted on members of the group, and where political, economic, social, cultural, biological and environmental conditions of life are such that the physical destruction of the group is threatened and where any one or more forms of such oppression exist to prevent the group's progressive, self-determined development.

"In one form or another (genocide) has been practiced for more than three hundred years" upon black people in the u.s. It began with the euro-amerikkkan slave trade, during which untold millions of Afrikans died crossing the "middle passage." All the deaths of Afrikans on slave ships, at the hands of village raiders and kidnappers, plantation owners and masked night riders, were acts of genocide.

"Your petitioners will prove that the crime of which we complain is in fact genocide within the terms and meaning of the United Nations Convention providing for the prevention and punishment of this crime ...

"We shall submit evidence proving 'killing members of the group' in violation of Article II of the Convention. We cite killings by police, killings by incited gangs, killings at night by masked men, killings always on the basis of 'race,' killings by the Ku Klux Klan, that organization which is chartered by the several states as a semi-official arm of government ...

"Our evidence concerns the thousands of negroes who over the years have been beaten to death on chain gangs and in the back rooms of sheriff's offices, in the cells of county jails, in precinct police stations and on city streets, who have been framed and murdered by sham legal forms and by a legal bureaucracy ...

"We shall prove that the object of this genocide, as of all genocide, is the perpetuation of economic and political power by the few through the destruction of political protest by the many. Its method is to demoralize and divide an entire nation; its end is to increase the profits and unchallenged control by a reactionary clique. We shall show that those responsible for this crime are not the humble but the so-called great, not the amerikkkan people but their misleaders, not the convict but the robed judge, not the criminal but the police, not the spontaneous mob but the organized terrorists licensed and approved by the state to incite to a Roman holiday.

"We shall offer evidence that this genocide is not plotted in the dark but incited over the radio into the ears of millions, urged in the glare of public forums by senators and governors. It is offered as an article of faith by powerful political organizations ... and defended by influential newspapers, all in violation of the United Nations charter and the Convention forbidding genocide ...

"Through this and other evidence we shall prove this crime of genocide is the result of a massive conspiracy, more deadly in that it is sometimes 'understood' rather than expressed, a part of the mores of the ruling class often concealed by euphemisms, but always directed to oppressing the negro people ... This implementation is sufficiently expressed in decision and statute, in depressed wages, in robbing millions of the vote and millions more of the land, and in countless other political and economic facts, as to reveal definitively the existence of a conspiracy backed by reactionary interests in which are meshed all the organs of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of government ..." (WCG, pps. 4-6)

In the seventeen years since the 1951 Petition was presented to the U.N., the practice of genocide upon black people in amerikkka has continued. In 1977 amerikkka, one out of every ten black youths are likely to die a violent death before the age of thirty, and 70% of all police murders in the city of Chicago are of black people. These figures reflect the contemporary manner in which amerikkka controls and rids itself of blacks, as well as the continuing practice of genocide: it used to be the whipping post and the hanging tree, but now it's the so-called "criminal justice system," death by police firearm, electric chair, behavior modification, or a countless number of other means.

" ... amerikkka recognized long ago what negroes now examine in disbelief: every black birth in amerikkka is political. With each new birth comes a potential challenge to the existing order. Each new generation brings forth untested militancy ... amerikkka doesn't know which black birth is going to be the birth that will overthrow this kountry." (H. Rap Brown, DIE, NIGGER, DIE, p. 1)

The new methods of genocide include "birth control" and sterilization, and are indicated by the high infant and maternal mortality rates among black people. Many of us think that for genocide to be effected through birth control and sterilization, that these means must be forced upon us. But we bear witness today that black and poor men and women are "intensively encouraged" through massive doses of propaganda, deceptive and misleading statistics, to submit to birth control and sterilization programs.

The economic hardships suffered by black and other oppressed people in this kountry have nothing (objectively) to do with large families or "unwanted children." Rather, our hardships result from an unequal distribution and application of political and economic resources -- from the "underdevelopment" of our peoples, which is caused by our colonial, dependent status.

"I'm the victim of violence, and you're the victim of violence. But you've been so victimized by it that you can't recognize it for what it is today."

El Hajj Malik El Shabazz, December 12, 1964

Amerikkka commits genocide against black people by causing us serious bodily and mental harm. We're forced to live in disease-ridden, structurally unsound housing, thus subjected to accidents, fires, lead poisoning and many other consequences of living in a generally unhealthy environment. This amounts to the practice of genocide as defined by the U.N. Convention on Genocide, and is punishable under international law.

All of the conditions from which we suffer as an oppressed people cause mental illnesses and physiological abnormalities which constitute genocide, because these conditions are systematically created and enforced against us by those who rule amerikkka..

Hospitals throughout amerikkka still contribute to the death or physical and/or mental handicap of black people by either refusing to admit black patients or by delaying and/or giving inadequate medical treatment.

Black men and women are brutalized and killed in the jails and prisons of amerikkka. The entire "criminal justice system" in the u.s. is clearly recognizable as an instrument in the commission of genocide upon Afrikan people.

Our children are physically and psychologically assaulted in amerikkkan schools. Their minds are crippled, self-confidence is drained from them, they are subjected to injections of drugs and massive doses of dehumanization.

The malnutrition we suffer as one of the results of our deliberate impoverishment causes a loss of learning time and ability in our children. Malnutrition also contributes to black infant deaths, organic brain damage, retarded growth, increased vulnerability to disease, emotional withdrawal, alienation, and frustration.

In his book DARK GHETTO, Dr. Kenneth B. Clark pointed out that, "The multiple use of toilet and water facilities, inadequate heating and ventilation and crowded sleeping quarters increase the rate of acute respiratory infections and infectious childhood diseases. Poor facilities for the storage of food and inadequate washing facilities cause enteritis and skin and digestive diseases. Crowded, poorly equipped kitchens, poor electrical connections and badly lighted and unstable stairs increase the rate of home accidents and fires."

In terms of frequency, hypertension is still the highest killer of blacks in amerikkka, and it is primarily caused by "an unconscious attempt at the mastery of the hostility which must be controlled ... the chronic rage ... produces the hypertension which initially is fluctuating in character. Eventually the pathological changes resulting from this overload on the cardiovascular-renal system lead to a consistently high blood pressure ..." (WCG, p. 79)

The rate of hypertension among blacks is twice that of whites. It is three to twelve times greater among blacks in young adulthood and middle age. Hypertension kills fifteen times as many blacks as whites between the ages of 15 and 40; seven times more black women than white women of any age group. Black men between 35 and 40 are two and one half times more likely to die of hypertension as white men of the same age. Black women aged 35 to 44 are three times more likely to die of hypertension as white women of the same age.

" ... Slaves often went mad on the voyages across the ocean. Men, particularly, who often went insane might often be flogged to death or simply clubbed and thrown overboard. Even in moments of clarity slaves had to be watched on board ship lest they commit suicide." (BLACK CARGOES: A HISTORY OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE, Daniel Mannix and Malcolm Crowley)

Today's slavery is called neo-colonialism. But the reality is concealed by the words of misleaders, enemy politicians, the brainwashing of enemy-controlled educational institutions and mass media, and the existence of what George Jackson called a mass flea market. The reality is revealed, though, in the real world: blacks with no jobs, no education, and being gradually carried to the point of no return on the waves of frustration which arise from our efforts to break the bonds of our oppression.

In 1977 amerikkka, black men, women and children still go insane, and still commit suicide in moments of clarity. Amerikkka is our "middle passage" today.

Figures for black admission to mental hospitals are on the rise. Statistics show that black men are entering government mental hospitals at twice the rate of white men. The highest rate of such admissions are for black men between the ages of 34 and 44, and for black women between the ages of 35 to 44. Schizophrenia is twice as frequent among blacks as among whites. The black suicide rate is fast on the rise.

Overall conditions of life which destroy our people, as well as measures aimed toward preventing births among us, are deliberately imposed upon us by the u.s. government.

Drugs have been used against us as a major weapon of colonialism and genocide. Addiction to heroin, methadone, alcohol, barbituates and amphetamines contribute to the destruction of our families and communities, to lives of prostitution, and generally used as a means of transforming or attempting to escape the oppression we suffer in all areas of life in amerikkka.

The high levels of drug use in black communities today are directly related to the willingness of black people to struggle against our oppressive condition. After the rebellions of the 1960's, the u.s. government saturated black and other oppressed communities with drugs. Heroin overdoses have killed tens of thousands of black people, many of these deaths were children under ten years of age. Methadone addictions and deaths now outnumber heroin addictions and deaths. Thousands of black babies are born methadone addicts by the thousands of mothers who take methadone and are not detoxified by methadone clinics once they become pregnant.

Black children attending enemy-controlled schools are often labeled "hyper-active" or "rebels" and forced to take mind-altering/controlling drugs such as Ritalin and Thorazine. Sometimes these drugs are mixed with school lunches without the knowledge of children or parents.

Blacks in the u.s. are consciously denied adequate medical care. Job discrimination and the reservation of the lowest-paying jobs for blacks results in a shortage of our life span and the early deaths of blacks who would otherwise live longer if not subjected to the conditions of national oppression and genocide.

We see one connection between inadequate education and economic oppression when realizing that poorly educated blacks are thus forced into the worst and most unhealthy jobs. This systematically reduced income itself contributes to the inability to acquire and maintain decent housing, medical care, food and clothing, and consequently reflects the practice of genocide.

Thousands of blacks die each year as a result of inferior living and health conditions. We suffer higher infant and maternal mortality rates, higher incidences of major diseases such as tuberculosis, pneumonia, influenza, nephritis, pephrosis and syphilis, colitis and diarrhea among our newborn.

Black infant deaths are twice that of white infants, and from one-third to one-half of black women who deliver in public hospitals have no pre-natal care. Statistics show that maternal deaths per 1000 live births for white women are 24.2, while for black women the rate of 98.1 per 1000 live births.

In the neo-natal period (the first 28 days of life) white infant deaths are 16.7 per 1000 live births, while for black infants the rate stands at 25.4. During the post-natal period (from 28 days to 11 months), white infants suffer a mortality rate of 5.5, while for black infants the figure is 15.4.

Black mothers, at the moment of conception, suffer from a host of illnesses that are passed on to their children, which result not only from poor maternal and infant health services, but from the overall oppressive conditions of black life in amerikkka.

The convention on genocide constitutes an extension and a means of giving concrete and explicit implementation and interpretation to the U.N. charter, giving force and effect to the charter's many pronouncements on human rights and the respect for the fundamental freedoms of all peoples. The convention reduces the proclamations of the U.N. charters' articles to the status of specific law, which means that, even if the convention on genocide didn't exist, the charge and punishment of the crime of genocide could still be raised and sustained under the provisions of the U.N. charter.

When the U.N. charter was ratified by the u.s. congress, it became a TREATY, and as such now stands as part of the "supreme law of the land" in the u.s. By having the nature of a treaty, both u.s. state and federal laws are superceded by the U.N. charter and the convention on genocide.

Therefore, wherever we find that u.s. state and federal laws conflict with the U.N. charter and the Convention on Genocide, we must challenge these laws. Wherever the practices of individuals or institutions, whether public or private, conflict with the U.N. charter or convention on genocide, these also must be challenged.

It should be pointed out that the u.s. eventually signed the convention on genocide out of political expediency, and not because of some concern for human rights, outside or inside of its borders.

There was strong opposition to the ratification of the convention during the hearings before the u.s. congress, precisely because it was understood that the u.s. government could be charged by the world for committing genocide against black people. This opposition soon dissipated as vocal opponents realized and were convinced that there was no danger of either the u.s. government or the United Nations moving to enforce the convention's provisions inside amerikkkan borders.

The United Nations was created under the inspiration and control of men and governments which at the time were oppressing and exploiting a majority of the world's people. They saw the U.N. as an instrument to be used in maintaining their world dominance, and as a means of manipulating dependent nations and of containing the struggles of oppressed peoples. It was largely because of these circumstances that the U.N. failed to act upon the 1951 Petition.

The U.N. is not what it was in 1951, and those who fear the indictment of the world's peoples and the loss of their monopoly on the world's resources and power have coined the phrase "the tyranny of the majority" to describe the ever-more successful attempts on the part of Third World peoples to secure and exercise their due power in the affairs of the world and in their own countries.

But, while the U.N. is not what it was, neither is it yet what it can or should be. There are still far too many member nations who are dependent upon u.s. money and arms, and therefore unwilling to act independently and in the interests of just resolutions to world problems. There are also still too many nations which are economically, politically and militarily weak to force through changes in distribution of power and decision making structures within the U.N.

Therefore, "It is politically infantile to argue that another appeal to the U.N. can or will force the United States to become an adherent of the aims, principles and purposes of that international body (which includes the Convention on Genocide). Such an appeal can, however, mobilize worldwide action against genocide ..." (WCG, p. X)

We must keep in mind that to mobilize worldwide action against genocide is to mobilize action against political, economic, social and physical oppression, because these are the manifestations of and reasons for the practice of genocide all over the world.

In raising the issue of genocide in the u.s., and on the international level, we again remind the world that "domestic genocide develops into the larger genocide that is predatory war." As in Vietnam and Korea; as in amerikkkan "involvement" in overthrowing legitimate and progressive/revolutionary governments and assassinating the peoples' leaders. Or, as in propping up fascist, or neo-colonialist puppets and "client states" such as Israel, Iran, South Africa and Bolivia.

In raising the matter of the genocide of Afrikans in the u.s., we point out the similarity between the genocide of Jews as a means of uniting and preparing the German people for an attempt at colonizing the world, and the escalating genocide practiced against us as a means of achieving similar ends. The question is, will Afrikans in the u.s. continue to "play Jew"?

If the answer is to be "NO!", then we must truly be our own liberators. We must see the necessity of arousing international action and support through our own action inside the u.s. To raise the question of genocide on an international level and hope to achieve our aims, we must first effectively raise the question inside the u.s., among our own people and potential allies. We must begin to struggle in our own interests before we can hope to encourage others to struggle on our behalf.

Build To Win!

Atiba Shanna
Stateville
Koncentration
Kamp
9/8/77



III

TOWARD CLARITY ON CC's, PP's, and POW's

IN beginning dialogue, moving toward a clear, shared definition of Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War ... in moving toward clear, applicable, and shared theory and practical methods of work, we can begin on two levels: We can discuss kamps in themselves, and we can discuss our imprisoned fellow nationals.

In discussing ALL things, tho, we understand that we do so from the perspective and within the context of, national liberation of the Black colony inside the u.s. From the perspective and within the context of New Afrika.

The kamps themselves, if viewed from the perspective of the colonial subject, are instruments used first to suppress the colonial people and the struggle for liberation. Only secondly do the colonial subjects view the kamps as instruments of oppression within the mother country.

The colonial subject sees koncentration kamps as instruments of repression against the colony. The kamps are used to commit genocide, just as the conditions in the plants, the conditions in the enemy-controlled schools, are used to commit genocide. The colonial subject does not see & respond to the kamps in the same way as the citizens of the mother/colonial country who may find themselves imprisoned.

Which is to say, whites in amerikka can't view the kamps from the perspective of the colonized Afrikan. They aren't focusing on land, on independence for a New Afrikan nation. And Afrikans must necessarily see kamps as an instrument in the hands of the colonizer, not simply as instruments in the hand of the monopoly capitalist. Prisons are -- from the view of the slave/colonial subject -- in the hands of the imperialist, the empire, the illegitimate ruler who subjugates the nation.

If the ideology & theory says Afrikans in the u.s. are a colony, an oppressed & subjugated nation seeking independence, then this informs the answers to ALL questions. Then we begin to see the errors & hindering tendencies when we pose questions such as: "What is the relationship of prisons to the black liberation movement."

There's a danger in such questions, because in many minds (& consequently in the practice of many), there's a tendency to see prisons outside of, rather than within the context of national liberation. As if prisons were on some other planet, and not as much an integral part of the movement as those Afrikans in schools, or those on welfare & living in poor housing, having bad health, living from hand-to-mouth, addicted to & selling drugs.

Afrikan people are spread out all over amerikkka, some work, some go to school, and some are in kamps. If the question "What is the relationship of prisons to the black liberation movement" is to be asked, it should be done within the same context used to ask "what is the relationship of workers, students, or the unemployed." Afrikans who happen to be in prison have the same "relationship" to the movement as do Afrikans everywhere else. The prisons themselves have the same relationship to the movement as all other institutions of the mother country. It's a colonial relationship.

If Afrikans outside prisons are struggling for national independence by striking a city public transportation service, or protesting cutbacks in day care funds, then Afrikans inside struggle for the same national independence by waging food & work strikes, filing suits, and by studying & building Afrikan organizations.

If Afrikans outside see the need for historical analysis, to build parties, fronts, and have strategic alliances with other national liberation movements, then Afrikans inside see the same needs, and must be as much a part of such parties, fronts and alliances as Afrikans outside.

If Afrikans outside can at least talk about the armed front, hint at the importance of an underground and all the other aspects of building a genuine mass movement, a true people's revolutionary war, then Afrikans inside can at least talk about the same things, and can see just as clearly that we're talking about ONE armed front, ONE underground, ONE mass people's movement, ONE revolutionary war waged by ALL Afrikan people.

And, in viewing the kamps from within the context of our revolutionary nationalist ideology/theory -- from within the context of a colony seeking national liberation -- we see several other oppressed nations inside the u.s. We see progressives & revolutionaries inside the mother country/oppressor nation. Nationals of these other oppressed nations, nationals, progressives and revolutionaries of the oppressor nation, also are in the kamps.

Therefore, the relations between imprisoned Afrikans, and imprisoned nationals of other oppressed nations, the nationals of the oppressor nation, are the same as those which exist outside.

Afrikans outside form & control their own organizations & parties. Afrikans inside do the same. But we remember that we're forming NATIONAL organizations -- organizations for all Afrikans, on both sides of the wall. Afrikans outside form united fronts, and national liberation fronts among themselves, and Afrikans inside do the same. (But these fronts are the same, not one front for Afrikans outside and another front for Afrikans inside. ONE front, with some members inside, and some outside ... just as some members will work at Ford, and others at u.s. steel, and others be students or on welfare.)

While being "no more important", Afrikans in kamps are certainly no less important than those at the point of production. The Brother approached in the plant goes to school at night; his mother & sister are on welfare; his father in the unemployment lines; they all live in run-down housing; his brother is in a kamp. He may be in one next week, or may have left one only the week before.

WE form Afrikan Prisoner Organizations among Afrikans. The united fronts we form are branches of the united fronts outside -- mere extensions. The alliances formed between Afrikans and other oppressed nations, also have their extensions inside the kamps.

There is no one "convict class" on the inside, just as there is no one "working class" on the outside. Just as different forms of oppression exist outside, among the various oppressed nations, and between the oppressed nations and the workers of the oppressor nation, these same differences in forms of oppression exist in kamps. The reality of the white prisoner remains the same in prison as the reality for whites outside prisons.

Afrikans inside form & become parts of Afrikan organizations. We form united fronts among ourselves, and we form ALLIANCES with progressive and revolutionary whites; we form ALLIANCES with Puerto Rican nationalists, Chicano and Mexican revolutionaries, and with Native Nation Warriors.

* * * * *

MOVING to define Afrikan Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War must also be within the context of national liberation revolution. Remembering that we're in the process of freeing and BUILDING a nation. BUILDING a nation.

The first and major problem we run into is the present tendency to view ALL Afrikan prisoners as political prisoners. There are reasons why many or most of us say that all Afrikans (in prison) are pp's or pow's. Some folks start from the fact of our kidnapping and enslavement more than three centuries ago, and the continuous struggle to break de chains. Some folks deal with the fact of "objective socio-economic conditions", and trace the "cause of all crime" to this source. By this means saying these "political-economic" circumstances make all who become a "victim" of them, automatic political prisoners and/or prisoners of war. Still others point to the enemy "criminal justice system", which deals with Afrikans in ways different from whites.

The point is that all these simply point out the objective colonial relationship.

The objective existence of Afrikan peoples' enslavement over three centuries ago don't alone make for national liberation. The objective conditions of the socio-economics of our colonial status don't alone make for BUILDING a nation.

The objective reality of a "criminal justice system" which operates throughout the empire and touches colonial subjects as well as the oppressed inside the mother country, don't alone make for the independence of New Afrika.

What we got to see more clearly is that, while all colonial subjects are "the same" vis-a-vis the oppressor, one of the requirements for genuine and successful national liberation revolution is the making of an analysis of the colony's social structure.

The conditions that ALL Afrikans in amerikkka experience are essentially and objectively colonial. But this doesn't mean that all Afrikan people have the same revolutionary capacity or inclination.

When we define ALL Afrikan prisoners as political prisoners and/or as p.o.w.'s, we AREN'T defining "political prisoners," -- we're simply DEFINING AFRIKAN PRISONERS AS COLONIAL SUBJECTS -- CAPTURED colonial subjects.

Plain & simply, our objective status as colonial subjects gives the political content to our entire lives, and overall conditions and experiences. Yeah, all Afrikans are p.o.w.'s and p.p.'s, whether inside or outside of kamps, if we simply deal from our status as a colonized nation of people. But in dealing in this way, we ONLY see ourselves as opposed to the oppressor, and the implications of this view are that we only perceive a re-form of the oppressor's system, so that we'll be treated "the same" as the oppressor and the masses in the oppressor nation. Such a view is not revolutionary, and runs counter to other ideological/theoretical and political lines rooted in a colonial perspective and aim toward independence and state power -- the BUILDING of a nation, based on class analysis of the colonized people.

If we continue to see nothing but "ALL Afrikans are p.o.w.'s and p.p.'s", we'll end up struggling against imperialism, but not necessarily FOR national liberation.

Even reactionary and counter-revolutionary elements within the nation are objectively colonial subjects. Any stool-pidgeon can claim the status of a political prisoner, simply by pointing out that he's in amerikkka against his will and had his culture destroyed, etc.

All Afrikans in amerikkka are members of an oppressed nation, which in itself is "political" and lends automatic political meaning to the conditions suffered by us all, whether in prison or out. But the recognition of the political significance that our colonial status has, does not define revolutionary nationalist consciousness or practice.

Recognizing objective colonial status is the point of departure, but we won't begin the journey of nation BUILDING without an analysis of our own internal, colonial, social structure. Just as we see the need for class analysis to take place outside, the same analysis must take place inside the kamps.

Thus, we say that in making our analysis of the nation, and in focusing particularly on those of us inside the walls, we see three sectors: the Captured Colonial, the Political Prisoner, and the Prisoner of War.

The Captured Colonials (or Captured Captives), are the mass, general prison populations which Afrikans comprise. The simple status of a 20th century slave gives political character and significance to us all. But doesn't determine whether that political character and significance will be good or bad -- for the nation and the struggle.

The New Afrikan nation in amerikkka was formed because of and during the battles with europeans in which we lost our independence. During our enslavement the many nations and tribes from the Continent shared one history, developed essentially one consciousness, acquired objectively one destiny -- all as a result of the suffering we all experienced as a dominated people.

"... But so far as the struggle is concerned it must be realized that it is not the degree of suffering and hardship involved as such that matters: even extreme suffering in itself does not necessarily produce the prise de conscience required for the national liberation struggle." (Amilcar Cabral, REVOLUTION IN GUINEA, p. 63)

While the "criminal" acts of all Afrikans are the results of our general economic, political and social relationships to the oppressive, imperialist state, there is no automatic, unquestionable revolutionary nationalist capacity and consciousness.

If we say that "crime" is a "reflection of the present state of property relations," then we must also say that for us these relations are those between a dominated nation and its oppressor and exploiter. The method of economic organization which governs our lives is an IMPERIALIST, a COLONIALIST method. Altho this colonial system is structured so as to force many of us to take what we need in order to survive, and altho there are conscious political decisions made by the oppressor once we find ourselves in the grips of his "criminal justice system", it must also be seen that a CONSCIOUS POLITICAL DECISION must also be made on the part of the colonial subject before his acts can have a subjective, functional political meaning WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE.

Put another way, if the "criminal" acts of Afrikans are the results of a "grossly disproportionate distribution of wealth and privilege", which stems from our status as a dominated, colonized nation, then the only way to prevent crime among us is to make a conscious decision to liberate the nation and establish among ourselves a more equitable distribution of wealth and privilege.

Thus, we see Captured Colonials.

For us, the Political Prisoner is one who has made and who acts on a conscious political decision to change the present state of property relations. Altho the Political Prisoner and the Prisoner of War levels of thought and practice sometimes over-lap, we use the element of organized revolutionary violence to distinguish between them.

Political Prisoners are those arrested, framed, and otherwise imprisoned because of relatively peaceful political activity against the oppressive conditions of the people. Political Prisoners are also those Captured Colonials inside the walls who have adopted a "revolutionary mentality" and become politically active. Activity on the part of P.P.'s behind the walls (food & work stoppages, petition drives, filing suits, organizing study groups, etc.) results in denial of parole, punitive transfers, harassment and brutality, long periods of segregation, close censorship of mail and visits, behavior modification attempts, and even assassination at the hands of prison guards or at the hands of reactionary prisoners.

We regard as Prisoners of War those Afrikans who have been imprisoned as a result of their having taken up arms or otherwise engaged in acts of organized revolutionary violence against the u.s. imperialist state. The act of expropriation, acts of sabotage, intelligence and counter-intelligence activities, and support activities when directly linked to acts of revolutionary violence and/or organized groups which are part of the Armed Front. Also, those activities of an overt or covert nature which are linked to the actions of armed People's Defense Units on the Mass Front -- those Afrikans involved in such activities and imprisoned because of them, are considered as Prisoners of War.

We also regard as Prisoners of War those Captured Colonials and Political Prisoners who consciously (or otherwise) commit acts of revolutionary violence while behind the walls, as well as those who join or form organizations which are and/or will become part of the Armed Front and/or part of the armed People's Defense Units of the Mass Front.

(All definitions here are greatly conditioned by the overall level of the national liberation struggle.

Build To Win!

Y. Y. Shanna
2/5/78
Stateville
Koncentration
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IV

ON REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS

The more moving we do, the more clear our own particular path becomes. It's also easier to see which of the contributions of others ARE exportable; to be able to incorporate other models of practice and theory which we can utilize. Also, to see which ones become ours "of their own accord", because of the similarity of concrete conditions here and other places.

More than Russia, China, Vietnam or Mozambique, things here have a great potential for becoming similar to places like Cuba or Brazil. Places where the political and military are combined; and where the urban area was the center of action. Where the societies were more industrialized, more technologically developed, and where the masses are much more influenced by the ideas flowing thru the state-controlled media, and more bound by the attitudes which promote and sustain in power those who rule.

When that point is reached in ones struggle where the necessity of using arms is seen, that is where revolutionary politics begins to define the level that the struggle has reached.

Inherently, revolutionary politics includes violence.

One cannot have revolutionary politics unless they've already recognized that "now" is the time to prepare for armed struggle: "preparing" means "now". So long as you say "we're exhausting remedies", you do not yet practice revolutionary politics.

Revolutionary politics is simultaneously "political" and "military". In revolutionary politics, there is NO separation between the political and the military. You cannot "build politically" in revolutionary politics, without at the very same instant "building militarily" as well. If one hand is around the pamphlet, the other must be around the weapon.

In revolutionary politics, you do not talk about "building the underground later"; you don't say "it's not time" or, "it's not possible" to build the army. Revolutionary politics are PRECISELY underground politics. If we agree that real revolution is still outlawed in amerikkka, then those who practice true revolutionary politics must be outlaws.

* * * * *

"Without armed struggle, there is no well-defined vanguard. And wherever armed struggle against oppression does not exist, the reason is because there is no political vanguard."

But it works both ways — at once. Political and military both at the same time, under the coordination of one centralized body.

"Because it is a mass struggle ... in order to win militarily it must politically assemble around it the majority of the people."

"Revolutionary politics, if they are not to be blocked, must be diverted from politics as such. Political resources must be thrown into an organization which is simultaneously political and military, transcending all existing polemics."

If the enemy allows us to hold meetings out in the open, it's not because "the conditions ain't ripe", but simply because we ain't prepared for and otherwise taken advantage of the existing ripe conditions.

If the military thrusts of a few years ago "failed", it was because no political vanguard existed (or endured), and that no political support was given to the military front. It makes no difference whether we were among those hunted by the pigs, or among those able to hold open meetings, read poems and be poets-in-residence, build the Shule's, celebrate Kwanza in the store fronts, print the papers and pamphlets -- if the military thrusts did "fail", it was because no political vanguard existed. If they failed, it was because neither the BPP, the BLA, APP, nor any other set of alphabets were practicing revolutionary politics.

In revolutionary politics, the "political" folks SUPPORT the "military" folks, and vice versa. Revolutionary politics is where the political complements the military, and the military complements the political. But there is really no difference between them, because revolutionary politics is a military politics -- and a revolutionary military is a political military.

Whoever claims to be a political vanguard must prove themselves to be a military vanguard. Whoever claims to be a military vanguard, must prove themselves to be a political vanguard.

Folks who consider themselves "political" must begin to at least reconsider their positions on the "timeliness" of organized revolutionary violence; people who consider themselves "military" must begin to understand that we cannot win, we cannot even present a truly serious threat, if we cannot ENDURE. And, we cannot ENDURE, unless there is "a long period of preparation, intensive organizational work to set up an efficient, reliable machinery which will not only generate the atmosphere for armed struggle ... but will also guarantee their logistic, communication, survival programs and propaganda network."

The atmosphere for armed struggle must be "created." We begin the creation by realizing that "all other remedies" have already been exhausted, and the task remains for the vanguard to act on this fact. It's the duty of the vanguard to convince the people that there already is no other alternative, and win them over to an acceptance of real revolutionary struggle, which by law means employing organized revolutionary violence on a strategical level.

The atmosphere is created by the vanguard -- which is simultaneously "political" and "military" -- IF it's a true revolutionary vanguard.

We misunderstand the revolutionary aspect of the "democratic revolution" if we seek to pursue so-called democratic rights, rather than discredit the entire process. We cannot undermine the system of the enemy if we continue to ask for better medical care, rather than begin providing our own. We discredit the enemy, and we demonstrate that all remedies have been exhausted, by building our own "State apparatus". You don't argue over busing, you present a challenge for actual control of the schools. (We beef about not having workers/cadre, and not having places to meet, when every other block has a school that closes its doors at 3:30. The schools are full of rooms and blackboards, auditoriums -- plenty of room to open the schools at night and use them to agitate, educate, and organize.) You don't take the landlord to court, you present a challenge thru assuming ownership of the property. Hold a People's Court. When you go to organize a tenant's union, lead them not "downtown", but to a belief that they have the right and the need to ignore "downtown" altogether; that they can discuss the situation, hear opinions, and decide among themselves to take total responsibility for the places they live in, and that they can assume ownership of that and all other property now in the hands of those who rule.

And when the landlord and the enemy courts send the sheriff and the city pigs, the People's Court will rely on its Armed Front. And the Armed Front will rely on the people. The Armed Front ain't nothing but the people in arms.

"Well, the people ain't ready for that." Bullshit! The people is always ready, always been ready -- but their leadership ain't. Even if it was a question of the people "not being ready," the responsibility rests with the so-called vanguard to make them ready, to take advantage of the conditions that already exist, and to create the ones that don't.

II

The peaceful means have already been exhausted. The real problem and issue is having enough people accept what's already a reality. Even the so-called vanguard.

We be talking about "when the means is exhausted, and the man is forced to vamp on us, cause we show that his promise is empty and that there is no other way. Then we move from "demo rev." to "national lib."

The fact is, we have already been vamped on. We are being vamped on right now.

The enemy was forced to vamp when he raided the village, when he went to sleep on the ship, turned his back on the plantation. He vamped in 1877, in 1910, in 1919 and 1948. The enemy vamped on us in 1970. He killed Nat, Malik,

George and Randy Evans after we showed that his promise was empty. We heightened the contradictions in Attica, before that in Watts and Detroit and Chicago. The contradictions was heightened in Jackson, Mississippi.

The people showed that they understood there was no other way when they took over the Amistad and put poison in the massas food, destroyed his crops, burned his barn, and took off for the swamps and mountains, and followed the north star.

The peaceful means have already been exhausted. We are 300 years too late to START a war. The only question is how to WIN the war. How do we move from this point in what has simply been a LONG WAR, with many reverses, many advances and many retreats on our part.

The revolution didn't start with Robert Williams, RAM, the BPP or the BLA. The revolution was/is not confined to 1968-1970 -- and it hasn't "failed." We've simply lost the initiative, the enemy launched a new offensive, broke thru our lines.

* * * * *

A colonized people do not wage a "democratic revolution." Really. China's experience added to scientific revolutionary theory because they offered lessons for people under semi-feudal, semi-colonial conditions. China also gave the lesson that hers -- China's -- was a NEW "democratic revolution", and what went toward distinguishing the NEW from the "old-type" democratic revolution, was that the new-type democratic revolution was not about democratic rights. It was resolutely opposed to imperialism.

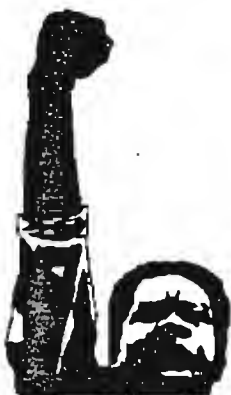
For the Chinese, the "democratic revolution" was completed when the people seized state power.

What was happening in China was that the "democratic revolution" WAS the national liberation revolution. China ACHIEVED national independence in 1949, and then began the socialist revolution. Afrikans in amerikkka are waging a national liberation revolution that we tend to sometimes call a "democratic revolution".

During the Chinese "democratic revolution" of pre-1949, what we saw in China was REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM. The difference between the "democratic revolution of the old type" and "the NEW democratic revolution of the special type", was really the difference between the old-type bourgeois-democratic nationalism, and the new-type revolutionary nationalism. Mao was pointing out the effect that the rise of imperialism had on national revolutions -- on the revolutions carried out by nations oppressed by imperialism. Colonialism.

The new "two stage" revolution, of moving from "democratic revolution of the new type" to the socialist revolution, was the same as our move from national liberation to the building of socialism.

Build To Win!



V

ON CONCRETE SOLIDARITY .

The key to the destruction of the empire lies stirring WITHIN it. Not outside. The head and heart, brain and nerves -- all vital organs essential to the perpetuation of life -- are all INSIDE, not outside.

What will be critical, what is fundamental and essential for the initiation of a socialist WORLD, is the eventual liberation of New Afrika, and other oppressed nations INSIDE the belly of the amerikkkan empire.

Not 1917 or 1978 Russia. Not 1949 or 1978 China. Not Cuba, Vietnam, Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe or Azania; not Brazil, Chile -- neither these nor any other place outside the belly of the empire will alone or together TRULY free the world from the grips and threats of amerikkkan capitalism, imperialism, colonialism or neo-colonialism.

They may help. They will cause change of conditions and create a climate offering greater potential, higher probabilities and increased chances of success ... but until the head and heart, brain and nerves -- until the vital organs are destroyed, the empire will simply re-adjust. Re-form. Make new alliances. It will change form, but it will live -- so long as New Afrika is subjugated. So long as Puerto Rico is a colony or neo-colony. So long as Native Nations don't have sovereignty over their lands and lives.

White folks will continue to re-group around the defense of the Amerikkkan Way, so long as the threats, the crises, the cutting off of limbs remains outside u.s. borders. The empire won't fall until its CENTER is crushed.

The birth of the empire was not Vietnam. It was "17th century amerikkka." The first true subjects of the empire were Native Nations and Afrikans. Amerikkka MEANS "empire". It has known no other life. Has never been anything else.

Folks inside the u.s. still too heavily think of imperialism as something externally happening. White folks especially -- even so-called progressives, radicals, revolutionaries, m-l's and communists -- all think and act as if imperialism exists outside u.s. borders. As if all they have to do is "support" and cheer the Vietnamese, the South Americans, and other folks outside amerikkka for the beast to die, and for there to be "peace & love" and for the proletariat's dictatorship over the workers' state to be real. WITH NO PAIN!

* * * * *

The historical question for the Afrikan held captive in amerikkka -- and, to a much larger extent than we truly grasp now -- the historical question for the world, has not been "two fold." There have been stages, changes, levels and phases in the process. The process has its (relative) beginning at the point of enslavement. FROM independence -- TO independence. Loss of freedom -- regaining of freedom. National subjugation -- national liberation. ONE PROCESS. More than one stage in the development of the process.

If we can dig this, then we add: the only qualification is to be made for the birth of NEW Afrika. A nation given shape by and thru oppression and exploitation.

Afrikans of various nationalities/tribes becoming a NEW ... Afrikan ... nation, "cemented by the essentially homogenous Afrikan cultural background and an essentially similar interaction of all the Afrikan peoples here with an essentially homogenous oppression."

The cement was, yeah, common blood and color. But it was more. The cement was really common experience. Common history. A tradition which developed, rooted not simply in the past, but DEVELOPED under the circumstances of colonial domination. There was Afrikan tradition (pre-european invasion and enslavement). Then there was NEW Afrikan tradition, characterized by the struggle to break de chains.

You don't separate the development of capitalism from the invasion of Afrika. But it's deeper. Deeper, cause you don't really separate the development of capitalism, english/european/amerikkkan imperialism, from not simply the invasion of Afrika, BUT FROM THE ENSLAVEMENT OF AFRIKANS, THEIR KIDNAPPING AND TRANSPORT.

The european/euro-amerikkkan slave trade is what "guaranteed" the development of capitalism. And we mean, guaranteed it AS WE NOW KNOW IT -- which is the only reality. Capitalism as we know it to be, in present and past form. Which is to say that, no matter the internal struggles in europe, among europeans, between those who ruled and those who were ruled, between serfs and lords, etc. -- no matter these influences -- what cemented and gave assurance to the development of what we now know as capitalism, imperialism, was the enslavement and transport of Afrikan people, FROM the Afrikan to other continents. Was the circumstances which led to the birth of New Afrika. The movement of Afrikan people FROM independence -- TO independence, is what will end the life of the empire. No matter how hard it may be for some folks to accept right now.

* * * * *

If it's true that whites want "struggle" without pain -- and we say that it is -- then it's because they don't want new life, don't really want a new order. It means they ain't really dis-satisfied with the present arrangement of power and property relations.

It also means that there is really no question of whether or not the white working class, or its so-called revolutionary m-l vanguard, do know who their "class enemy" is. They know. All romans knew ceaser.

They knew ceaser while searching for a new, shorter route to the east. They knew him while "bringing civilization" to the amerikkkan west. While throwing tea in the harbor, over-seeing the plantation and while building trains that would run from ocean to ocean.

Life was always added to ceaser's reign by the citizens and mercenaries of the empire, as they rushed to defend the frontiers and colonial possessions by suppressing movements towards freedom. There was no need to "inject" so-called racism into "the oppressed working class", cause there was already first allegiance to ceaser, a love of rome, and the desire to maintain the privileges made possible by suppressing the provinces and colonies.

Again, the only thing that will end the reign of ceaser and bring an end to the empire, is the liberation of New Afrika and other oppressed nations INSIDE the u.s.

The only way to achieve even a semblance of a permanent and qualitative break of grip on external possessions is to break de chains internally. Only when amerikkka collapses in the CENTER, will her grip on the world be broken. Like a man standing on a ledge, gripping the window frame. The ledge gives way, he may hang for a while, but soon he'll lose his grip, the force of gravity will pull him, cause he'll have nothing to stand on (our backs).

No foundation means no balance, means the inability to re-form, cause the pressure on internal organs, the "working class" -- absent the foundation, the material basis, for privileges -- will be unavoidably forced to confront ceaser.

II

It don't take a lot to make it clear as to the responsibility of the so-called white left in the struggle. And it's not even necessary for us to spend time formulating theories and suggestions. Less than a minute spent reading Cabral (or a number of others), answers the question:

To end up with, I should like to make one last point about solidarity between the international working class movement and our national liberation struggle. There are two alternatives: either we admit that there really is a struggle against imperialism which interests everybody, or we deny it. If, as would seem from all the evidence, imperialism exists and is trying simultaneously to dominate the working class in all the advanced countries and smother the national liberation movements in all the underdeveloped countries, then there is only one enemy against whom we are fighting. If we are fighting together, then I think the main aspect of our solidarity is extremely simple: it is to fight -- I don't think there is any need to discuss this very much. We are struggling in Guinea with guns in our hands, you must struggle in your countries as well -- I don't say with guns in your hands, I'm not going to tell you how to struggle, that's your business; but you must find the best means and the best forms of fighting against our common enemy: this is the best form of solidarity.

There are, of course, other secondary forms of solidarity: publishing material, sending medicine, etc. I can guarantee you that if tomorrow we make a breakthrough and you are engaged in an armed struggle against imperialism in Europe we will send you some medicine too.

In Revolutionary Solidarity

Bakari Shanna
2/3/78
2/11/78
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VI

MESSAGE TO AFRIKAN-AMERICAN WOMEN FOR POSITIVE AND PRODUCTIVE CHANGE

"You can always tell the degree of political consciousness
of a nation by the consciousness of its women." -

Kwame Nkrumah (paraphrased)*

For the above reason alone, I felt honored when asked by Afrikan-American Women for Positive and Productive Change of Washington, D.C. to do a brief article in the first edition of their newsletter. The consciousness of our women is growing by leaps and bounds - and that means the consciousness of our nation is also growing. I don't think there's any question in the minds of conscious Black people on whether we are a nation in the U.S. or not - we are a nation, we exist - we are simply an oppressed, weak, scattered Afrikan nation in U.S., which is not yet free or independent - and has yet to gain the power to determine its own destiny.

We are an oppressed nation because we are weak, because we are scattered, because Mother Afrika is weak - and because the U.S. is strong and unjust towards us and other oppressed nationalities. So what are we to do? This is the burning question of our times. Let us listen to the wise counsel of the greatest organizers of Blacks that the U.S. has ever known - the man who was able to grasp the heart beat of the very soul of Black people - not only in the U.S. - but all over the world.

"If we must have justice, we must be strong, if we must be strong, we must come together, if we must come together we can only do so through the system of organization. Let us not waste time in breathless appeals to the strong while we are weak but lend our time, energy, and effort to the accumulation of strength among ourselves by which we will voluntarily attract the attention of others." - Marcus Garvey, (Philosophy and Opinions)

Is that not the most simple truth in the world? Is there anyone who cannot recognize it as the very "essence" of truth? Yet, we haven't done it. We have not done it because we do not have the will to do it. We have no will because we lack conviction. We lack conviction because of our low political consciousness. We have a low political consciousness because we have been oppressed, enslaved, exploited, terrorized, victimized and kept ignorant and in fear for such a long time that we barely trust our own judgements anymore. We have been taught that freedom is caddilacs, TV's, cashmeres and furs, "get mines", a nice house in the suburbs - even while we are in the midst of our young Black men going to their deaths in droves, our young Black women and children following suit. This is freedom??? This is pure madness!!! This is not freedom but genocide on the installment plan when heroin, police and prisons are killing off our young Black men at an alarming rate - when welfare, abortions, sterilization, cancer and poverty are killing off Black children, Black women and

our future at an even more astonishing rate! When any nation confuses genocide with freedom - then that nation is in a drastic danger of becoming extinct - without even realizing it.

So we must begin to break loose and start thinking for ourselves, analyzing for ourselves, questioning everything that affects our livelihood and well being. We must never forget that we are an oppressed minority nation within a White majority racist oppressor nation - so we would be foolish to gullibly accept their ideas and concepts as equally valid for us - especially in the areas of birth control, abortions and sterilizations - in particular when the whole basis for these measures are built upon the lie of over population. "Over population" is only a code-word meaning there are "too many niggas". They certainly aren't talking about the world being over populated with too many european peoples. They're saying there are too many Black and Third World peoples - but even this is a bald faced lie! The Peoples Republic of China says that "every baby is born with one mouth - but two hands." (Meaning each person born has two hands to work and produce enough to feed not only him/herself - but others too). That is a very enlightened approach to the issue of population - especially coming from the most populated country in the world - and one that feeds itself very well now that it is free, independent and socialist!

The Peoples Republic of China also makes available and condones birth control measures in the form of contraceptives, abortions and sterilization as desired by their peoples - but they are an independent socialist nation in control of their own destiny - and are providing this right and service to their own people - and in particular to the majority Han nationality which makes up about 90% of their total population. Birth control measures are equally available to national minorities but there is no campaign directed at the national minorities (secret or otherwise) to use birth control measures. In fact, they recommend that their national minorities refrain from any heavy use of birth control so that they can build up - their numbers and become more equal in all ways within the society. Can you imagine the race riots it would touch off in the U.S. if this policy was even suggested - not even considering putting it in effect?? Whites here would riot at the very thought of them practicing birth control while recommending that minority nationalities of Blacks and Third World refrain from heavy use of birth control in order to build up our numbers in the U.S. Yet, we Blacks still naively talk of equality, freedom and justice in the U.S.!!

As stated earlier - over population is nothing but a lie and a code-word for saying there are too many peoples of color in the world. Why is it a lie? Because the world's total population is presently around 4 billion peoples. Long Island is a slender island laying off New York City. The island is so small it is hardly noticable when looking at a map of the entire U.S. - it is approximately 120 miles long and at most 20 miles wide in some places. Well, you can stand up every man, woman, and child in the world on Long Island - all Four billion of us - and no one would have to be stacked on anyone else. Not one Chinese or Black would have to be stacked on top of a single White! So where is the over population problem if you can put the entire current world's population on tiny Long Island - and the entire remainder of the world's lands, and waters would be uninhabited by humanity????

Simple arithmetic will prove this is true. Assume each person requires a 3 foot square of earth to stand on - which is really 1 square yard. There are 3,097,600 square yards in one square mile. Long Island is 1400 square miles in area. Therefore there are 4,336,640,000 square yards of earth surface on Long Island - meaning you can stand up 4.3 billion peoples in Long Island! That's enough room to hold the worlds 4 billion people population - and still have extra room left over for 336 million more people!! Which is more than room enough for the U.S. population again - all this right out on tiny Long Island, New York. Over population is just another racist hoax on people of color in the world. Like all the other racist lies that have been pushed on us for the last 500 years - and we best begin thinking and acting for ourselves!

i thank you for your patience and urge us all to come together in common pursuit of our national liberation, justice and future salvation.

Build To Win!

Sundiata Acoli
TSP - 3/13/78

(*NOTE - Nkrumah's exact words were "The degree of a country's revolutionary awareness may be measured by the political maturity of its women" - but the quote was unavailable at the time of writing.-S.A.)